

Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management Yucca Mountain Project

Overview of the Yucca Mountain Site Characterization Project

Presented to:
**Society for Effective Lessons Learned
Sharing (SELLS)**

Presented by:
Don Horton
Deputy Project Manager
U.S. Department of Energy

March 13, 2002
Las Vegas, Nevada

Outline

- **Welcome**
- **Overview of Yucca Mountain Site Characterization Project**

An aerial photograph of a vast desert landscape, likely the Mojave Desert. The terrain is characterized by rolling, eroded hills and valleys, creating a complex pattern of ridges and shadows. The colors are muted, with various shades of brown, tan, and grey. In the far distance, a range of blue-toned mountains is visible under a sky filled with soft, white and grey clouds. The sun is positioned high in the sky, creating a bright, hazy glow that permeates the scene. Overlaid on the center of the image is the text "Welcome to Las Vegas" in a bold, orange, sans-serif font. The text is slightly transparent, allowing the underlying landscape details to be seen through it.

Welcome to Las Vegas

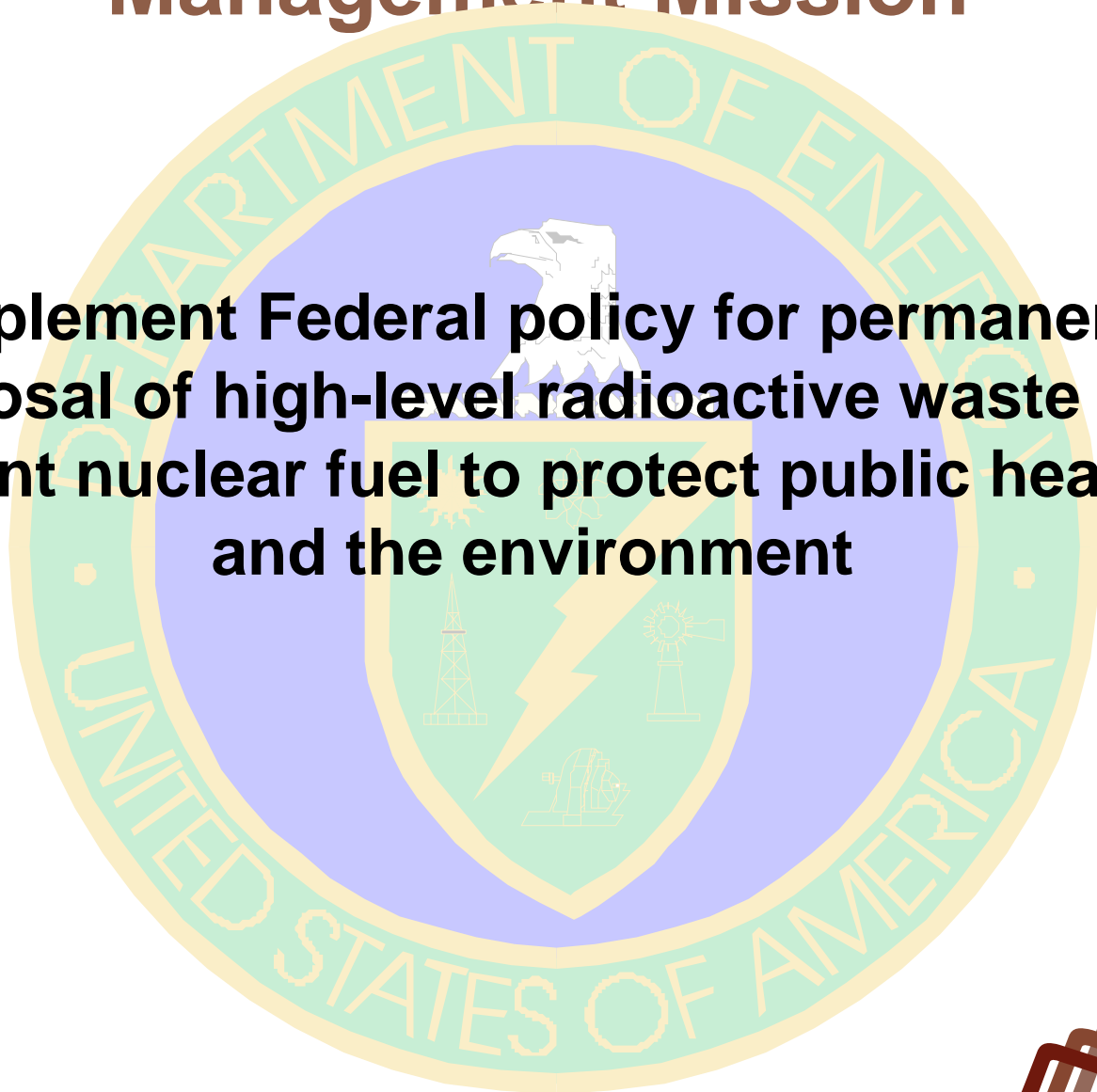
Nuclear Waste Policy Act

- 1982 - Congress established the Nuclear Waste Policy Act (NWPA) for the disposition of high-level radioactive waste and commercial spent nuclear fuel
- 1987 - NWPA as amended eliminated all sites but Yucca Mountain to be characterized for a potential repository
 - Requires a final environmental impact statement (EIS) to accompany a site recommendation
 - Requires Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to adopt, to the extent practicable, the EIS
- 1997 - Congress directed the Department of Energy (DOE) in the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act to prepare a report assessing feasibility of developing a repository at Yucca Mountain



Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management Mission

Implement Federal policy for permanent disposal of high-level radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel to protect public health and the environment



The Scientific Program Provides a Base to Support a National Decision



Directly characterizing the repository block



Conducting laboratory tests



Conducting surface-based testing

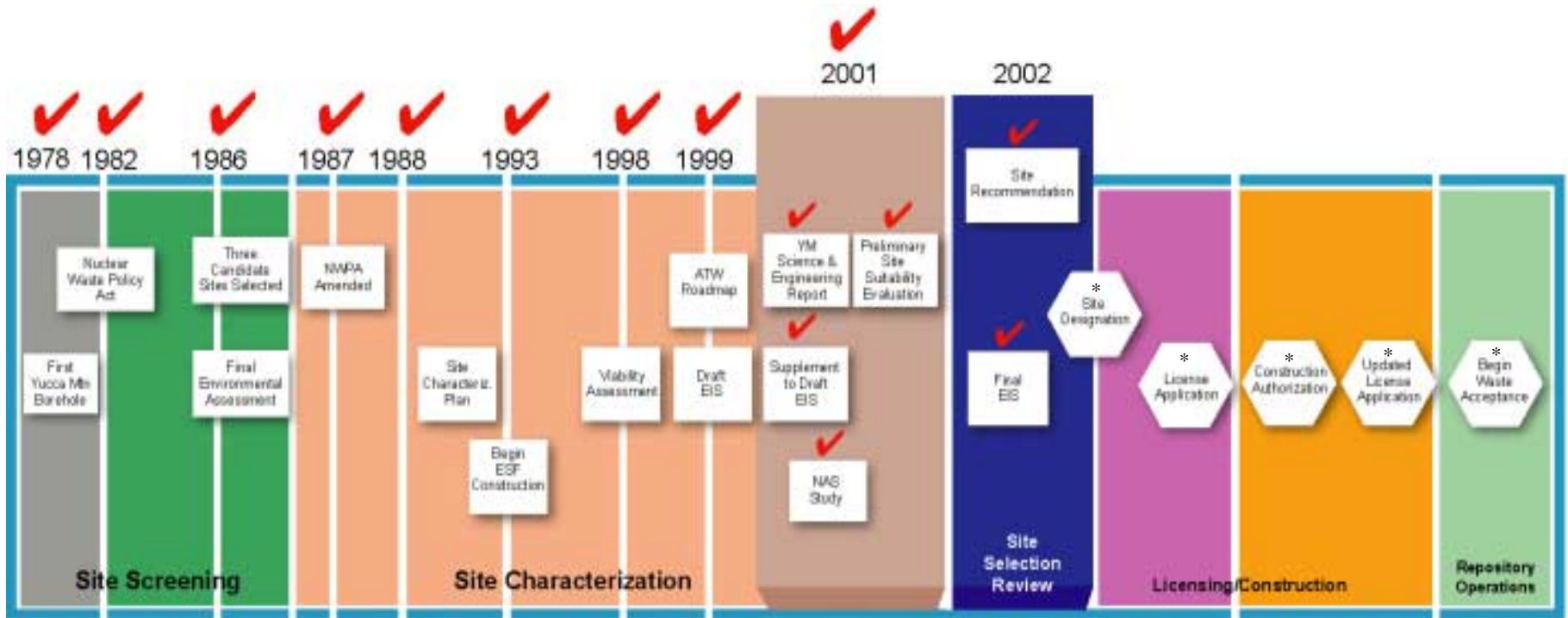


Studying analogues



One of the most intensive scientific programs in the world continues to be conducted at Yucca Mountain

Repository Milestones



G:\Charts & Diagrams\Repository Milestones\Repository Milestones.a

***Pending Congressional Action consistent with NAWPA**

Summary

- **DOE has met a major milestone toward addressing a societal issue and its overall mission**
- **DOE remains committed to the safe disposal of high-level radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel**
 - **We are proceeding toward waste acceptance in 2010**
- **Upon the recommendation of the Secretary, President Bush has submitted his recommendation to Congress for approval to submit a license application**
 - **We await further actions in Congress regarding site designation**

Lessons Learned on the Yucca Mountain Site Characterization Project

- **Transitioning from Site Characterization to Licensing Phase**
- **Increasing Safety Culture**
 - Active self assessments and lessons learned programs
- **Next speaker:**
 - April Gil, Team Lead, Regulatory Interactions and Policy Development, Office of Licensing and Regulatory Compliance